

13 July 2017

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
Office of the Secretary  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest  
Room TW-A325  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 17-108, Restoring Internet Freedom

Chairman Pai, Commissioner O’Rielly, and Commissioner Clyburn:

On behalf of Lincoln Network, I write to you today to express support for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 17-108 “Restoring Internet Freedom.” We request that you take into consideration our comments below.

At Lincoln Network, we believe that when technology and public policy meet, under the right conditions and with the right tools, both worlds win. With this mindset, we respectfully request that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reverse its 2015 order regulating the internet as a public utility under Title II of the Communications Act of 1934.

Lincoln Network believes that the internet should not be beholden to burdensome regulation. As you will see in our attached comments, I have experienced firsthand how Title II regulations can stifle companies of all sizes, limiting both investment and competition in the internet economy.

An open internet is crucial, but how we achieve it is just as important. Regulating the internet as a public utility is a recipe for stagnation. Let’s take an entrepreneurial attitude and look to the future, rather than apply old rules to a new world. Lincoln will continue to support actions aimed at encouraging our elected officials in Congress to take up the torch of creating and maintaining sensible and forward thinking policies for the regulation of the internet.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garrett Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Garrett Johnson  
Lincoln Network  
Co-founder

April 26, 2017

Garrett Johnson  
Lincoln Network  
Co-founder

#### Chairman Ajit Pai Introductory Remarks

I am Garrett Johnson, a co-founder of Lincoln Network.

For those of you who perhaps are not familiar with Lincoln Network, since 2013 we have focused on building bridges between the tech community and government leaders in Washington DC and across the country.

But today, I am not here speaking as a telecom policy expert or lobbyist or lawyer. I am none of the above.

In 2011, I moved to Silicon Valley after the company I started was accepted into Y Combinator.

We had to register as a common carrier with the FCC. Complete 5 reports per year that required roughly 53.5 hours of work according to the OMB estimate. Although the company was acquired 1.5 years ago and my co-founders and I have not been involved in the operations of the company for about six months, we still received a call from South Carolina regulators hounding us for the \$20 fee that apparently owed for 2016.

While jumping through these regulatory hoops, we built a product that businesses wanted and paid for. And created jobs and meet payroll.

Everyday, entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley and across the country are fighting to build companies that might transform education, healthcare, transportation, among many other industries.

Many are doing important work, but they are no superheros. They are simply continuing a long tradition of Americans who pursue a dream, who solve problems. Who tinker and experiment until something clicks.

We all must work to preserve this tradition. To ensure that people who grow up in the mid-West, or rural Appalachia or low income neighborhoods like Belmont Heights, Florida, where I am from, have a shot to pursue a dream.

This is why Lincoln works to connect policy makers and the technology community.

The rate of new firm creation is declining for the first time in recent history. Tech and government leaders must work together to reverse this trend and promote more access and more innovation.

I believe in a free and open internet, as I am sure you and most reasonable people would. But the process for getting to this outcome and how rules are enforced makes all the difference in the world.

The internet is not a monopoly.

It has not experienced severe market failings.

The internet is always evolving and improving, unlike water services, transit or other public utilities.

Companies, in order to stay relevant in the marketplace, do work to provide consumers with faster speeds, new products, and new services.

In February, nearly 200,000 Californians were forced to evacuate because of a collapsing dam, due to years of neglect, but some think it's a good idea to give the same regulatory authority imposed over power grids and bridges and waterways in our country to regulating the internet.

I disagree.

Government control over the internet invariably leads to more taxes, new rate regulations, new fees, and guaranteed micromanagement.

If the goal is to keep the internet open and free, to promote more access and innovation - something we all agree with – it should not be managed or controlled by the government

...

I am honored this afternoon to introduce someone who, perhaps more than any other single person in the country today, is shaping the future of technology policy.

In January, he was nominated by the President to be the next Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission.

He took the helm of this important federal agency guided by a handful of principles:

- No. 1 – Consumers benefit from market competition, not preemptive government regulation.
- No. 2 – Policymakers should be highly skeptical of any technology player calling for increased regulation on their competitors or any kind of special treatment.
- No. 3 – Federal regulations – when they are needed – should be created to reflect today's technology and today's dynamic marketplace, rather than decades-old industries.
- No. 4 – The FCC, like other government agencies, is bound by the laws created by Congress; it cannot and should not be a super-legislator.
- No. 5 – The FCC functions best when policy is created through consensus and bipartisan buy-in.

He is a first-generation American.

A graduate of Harvard and University of Chicago Law School.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome to the podium, Commissioner Pai.